

June 20, 1958

PERSONAL

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Dear Pete:

I am writing to tell you about and to seek your participation in a conference which M.I.T. is organizing on the general subject of science and public policy.

As you are aware, quite a lot of people in both the natural and social sciences here at the Institute have become increasingly concerned with the relation between scientific and technical developments and social, political, and economic policy. The Institute has recently inaugurated a Ph.D. program in political science which will place special emphasis on areas in which scientific and political and social considerations overlap and interact. This will include the role of science in national security, in international relations, in education, in social and economic welfare in the United States, and in a variety of other fields.

We have decided to hold a conference over the Thanksgiving week end from November 28 to November 30 of a relatively small group (thirty-five or forty) of outstanding natural and social scientists to explore a number of these problems. This conference will be entirely off the record. The purpose is not to arrive at conclusions or to publish results but rather to stimulate an exchange of views.

I enclose a copy of the tentative agenda we have worked out for this conference. As you will see, the topic for one of the sessions is "What Can We Learn from the Russians." We are anxious to have someone whose central preoccupation has been the analysis and interpretation of developments in Soviet science prepare a paper which would kick off the discussion of this subject. Everyone has agreed that you are the logical candidate for this assignment.

President Killian has agreed to present the paper on the first topic, "Science and Policy;" either General Doolittle or Guy Stever will do the one on "Science and National Security;"